Beyond computer assisted language learning

http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/seminars/beyond-computer-assisted-language-learning

Huw Jarvis

1. The defining characteristics of computer-assisted language learning (CALL)
2. CALL today - a critique
3. The impact of computer-mediated communication (CMC) on teaching English
4. The significance of social media and less formal learning
5. New technologies require new frameworks for teachers
6. The practical implications of social media and beyond

Huw Jarvis takes English language teachers on the journey from the origins of computer assisted language learning in English Language Teaching to the modern world of English usage and mobile phones, and discusses what implications this has on English language learning and teaching today.

Session summary and objectives

In this talk, Huw Jarvis shares his research and insight into the use of technology for language learning purposes. He explains that we have moved beyond the CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) context to a world in which language use is now a means to an end, where international people are using English alongside their own language in order to achieve real life purpose online. He wants language teachers to consider how this new reality affects the ways in which we use technology for language learning purposes.

Recent language education-based studies question whether the traditional CALL paradigm is still the most appropriate. Huw argues that conscious learning using one computer is no longer suitable for looking at how today's web generation students use technology. Our students multi-task and in doing so many things unconscious acquisition is as important as conscious learning, particularly when students are accessing and transmitting information in both their first language and in the English language.

Recent studies suggest a shift from Computer Assisted (language) Learning (CALL) to Mobile Assisted (language) Use (MALU). The presentation discusses all of these issues in relation to implications for classroom practice.

Who is this session for?

- All pre-service teachers attending a course on English language teaching or technology assisted language learning.
- English language teachers at all levels (new to experienced) with an interest in the evolution of the use of technology in English language learning.
- Teacher trainers who need a summary of the move from CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) to MALU (Mobile Assisted Language Use).

About the speaker

As this seminar was published, Huw Jarvis was Senior Lecturer in TESOL at the University of Salford, Manchester. He has worked in training and on projects in many places including Thailand, Kuwait and Sudan. Huw's main research area covers computers in language pedagogy and his work in this area has been supported by the British Council's English Language Teaching Research Awards. Huw is also the editor of www.TESOLacademic.org which disseminates TESOL-based research via free video webcasts.

2. Computer assisted language learning (CALL) has now been around for more than 30 years. How do you think the use of technology for language learning has changed over that period of time? Huw Jarvis will provide some insight into this. Make notes while watching and compare what you predicted against what you learn in the seminar.

Real life practice

As Huw Jarvis has done, carry out a survey with the students in your educational establishment to find out how they use technology in the modern world.

Ask your students questions such as:

- How often do you use computers or digital tools in your daily lives?
- When using computers outside of your studies, which language(s) do you usually use?
- When do you use English online?
- Do you use different English on social media from what you are taught in the classroom?
- What suggestion would you offer to ensure that English taught in the classroom is useful for your life?

Share your findings with a wider professional network of teachers.

Top tips

1. Technology in education is continually developing. Set aside 20 minutes every week to read about what is happening with technology in education in the wider world. A good source is the IATEFL Learning Technologies Special Interest Group (LTSIG). Follow them on Twittter @iatefl_ltsig.

2. Allow your students to bring their digital technology into class with them. Set 'house rules' for usage from the start.

3. Establish within your school the best way for students to engage with technology for learning purposes to ensure it is approved, safe and legitimate.

4. Stay connected to your students and their digital world. Ask them, weekly, what is new on the Internet or what the latest popular apps are. Consider how this new information might be applied to the learning of English.

5. Strive to incorporate the 3 Cs – communication, creativity and collaboration into teaching and learning on a regular basis.

6. Provide opportunities for your students to network online with the international community to learn and practice English. Encourage students to join the British Council's vibrant social networks for adult learners, http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/; teens, http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/; or young learners

7. One way to do this would be to partner with another school outside of your country. Search for a school to partner via the British Council Schools Online website. You can also find classroom resources, professional development materials and information about funding to help build your international school partnership at https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/.

Join the discussion!

1. Nowadays, communication, creativity and collaboration are high priorities in the world of education and work. With your peers, discuss to what extent these themes have become central to the English language curriculum in your school or college.

2. How are you using technology for language learning? Are you using technology to promote communication, creativity and collaboration through the English language? How much success have you seen? What are the challenges?

3. English is still the dominant language on the Internet. To what extent are you helping your students to use both English and their native language for real world and digital effectiveness?

4. Huw Jarvis emphasises the importance of connectivism in education nowadays – the need to go beyond 'knowing information' to developing a whole range of interconnected skills (such as digital literacy) in order to help young people succeed in the world. To what extent is your curriculum addressing connectivism?